

Application No.: 10/617,791

Page 14

Art Unit: 3653

REMARKS

The specification has been reviewed, and clerical errors are corrected.

On page 2 of the Action, claims 1 to 5, 8, 13 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by *Hoffman* (US Patent No. 4,415,263).

On page 4 of the Action, claims 1, 5, 6, 8, and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by *Ishii et al.* (US Patent No. 5,927,702).

On page 5 of the Action, claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Hoffman* (US Patent No. 4,415,263).

On page 5 of the Action, it was indicated that claims 7, 10, 11, 14, 16, and 20-22 are allowable if rewritten in independent form.

In view of the rejections, claim 1 has been amended to clarify the features of the invention and include the limitations of claim 2. Accordingly, claim 2 has been canceled. Claims 3 to 6, 8, 13, 15 and 20 have been amended to correct clerical errors, correct dependency and/or clarify the features of the invention. Claims 7, 9 and 10 have been canceled. Claims 11 and 16 have been amended to be independent form. New claims 23 to 28 have been filed to obtain proper scope of the invention.

With the amendments, claims 11, 16, and 23 to 26 should be allowable.

The applicants respectfully traverse the rejections and request reconsideration. With the amendments, claims 1

Application No.: 10/617,791

Page 15

Art Unit: 3653

to 5, 8, 13 and 15 are not anticipated by *Hoffman* for the reasons explained below. Further, claims 1, 5, 6, and 8 are not anticipated by *Ishii et al.* for the reasons explained below.

As recited in amended claim 1, a medium tray is attachable to an image recording apparatus for feeding a record medium one by one and recording an image on the record medium. The medium tray comprises a depository in which the record medium is loaded such that front and rear portions of the record medium have different angles with respect to a feeding direction of the record medium when the record medium is in the depository. The depository includes a medium support for placing the front portion of the record medium and a rear guide extending upwardly from a rear end of the medium support for guiding the rear portion of the record medium upwardly. Further, the medium support protrudes outside of the image recording apparatus from a side of the image recording apparatus to be exposed.

In particular, in the medium tray of the invention, the depository includes the medium support protruding outside of the image recording apparatus from the side of the image recording apparatus to be exposed. Accordingly, it is possible to reduce a size of the image recording apparatus even with the medium tray attached to the image recording apparatus. Further, it is possible to stably support the sheet with the medium support and the rear guide.

Hoffman has disclosed an electrophotographic plain paper copier apparatus of a highly compact nature in which the copier is modular in construction and has a removable magazine to hold the paper supply in an arcuate disposition.

Application No.: 10/617,791

Page 16

Art Unit: 3653

In the electrophotographic plain paper copier apparatus, a substantial number of the components and parts of components of the copier are located within the general quadrant subtended by the magazine thereby shortening the overall length of the copier.

As shown in Fig. 2 in *Hoffman*, a major component of the copier 10 includes the paper supply magazine 38 which is removable and is at the back of the copier 10 (col. 5, lines 22-25). The resilience of the spring 92 is such that it will yield when a stack of paper 40 is pushed downwardly in the arcuate paper receiving chamber 94 formed between the walls 72 and 76 but will nevertheless raise the bottom end of the stack, indicated at 40', against the stripping roller 96, the corners of the stack being caught by small triangular stops 98 formed at the opposite ends of the stop partition 70, these stops engaging over the top of the stack (col. 6, lines 10-18).

As shown in Fig. 2 in *Hoffman*, the paper supply magazine 38 is accommodated inside the copier 10. A portion of the paper supply magazine 38 supporting a rear end of a sheet does not extend beyond an upper portion of the copier. Accordingly, when it is necessary to place a sheet having a large size, it is necessary to increase a size of the paper supply magazine 38, thereby increasing a size of the copier 10. Further, it is difficult to support a sheet having a size beyond the paper supply magazine 38.

In the medium tray of the invention, the depository includes the medium support protruding outside of the image recording apparatus to be exposed. Accordingly, it is possible to reduce a size of the image recording apparatus even with the medium tray attached to the image recording apparatus. Further, it is possible to stably support the

Application No.: 10/617,791

Page 17

Art Unit: 3653

rear portion of the sheet with the medium support and the rear guide.

In *Hoffman*, a portion of the paper supply magazine 38 supporting a rear end of a sheet does not extend beyond an upper portion of the copier, and there is no disclosure or suggestion regarding the medium support protruding outside of the image recording apparatus to be exposed. Therefore, *Hoffman* does not disclose all of the features of the invention recited in claim 1.

Ishii et al. has disclosed a sheet feeder and image forming apparatus using the same. As shown in Fig. 1 in *Ishii et al.*, the multi-sheet feed section AF includes a multi-sheet feed tray 2 which holds the sheets P, a sheet feed roller 3 which serves as a sheet feeding means for supplying the sheets P held by the multi-sheet feed tray 2, a pressure plate 21 which serves as a sheet supporting means for pressing the sheet P against the sheet feed roller 3, a separation pad 22 for separating the sheets supplied by the sheet feed roller 3 one sheet at a time, and a pair of conveyor rollers 4 for conveying the separated sheets to the image forming means (col. 3, lines 22-30).

As shown in Fig. 2 in *Ishii et al.*, the multi-sheet feed tray 2 is secured to the image forming apparatus body. A left multi-sheet side regulating member 16L and a right multi-sheet side regulating member 16R, together serving as side regulating means, are provided on the multi-sheet feed tray 2 in order to regulate the positions of both side edges of the sheets P loaded on the tray 2. The left and right multi-sheet side regulating members 16L and 16R include supporting sections 16La and 16Ra, respectively, for supporting the bottom surface of the sheet P at both

Application No.: 10/617,791

Page 18

Art Unit: 3653

side edges thereof, and side walls 16Lb and 16Rb, respectively, for regulating the side edges of the sheet. The supporting sections 16La and 16Ra, and the side walls 16Lb and 16Rb extend downstream from the sheet feed roller 3 and the pair of conveyor rollers 4 in the sheet conveying direction up to a location just preceding the transfer roller 5 (col. 3, lines 46-61).

As shown in Fig. 1 in *Ishii et al.*, the multi-sheet feed tray 2 is disposed inside the image forming apparatus 1, and extends upwardly from an upper portion of the image forming apparatus 1. Accordingly, when it is necessary to place a sheet having a large size, it is difficult to support a rear end of the sheet beyond the multi-sheet feed tray 2.

In the medium tray of the invention, the depository includes the medium support protruding outside of the image recording apparatus from the side of the image recording apparatus to be exposed. Accordingly, it is possible to stably support the rear portion of the sheet with the medium support.

In *Ishii et al.*, there is no disclosure or suggestion regarding the medium support protruding outside of the image recording apparatus from the side of the image recording apparatus to be exposed. Therefore, *Ishii et al.* does not disclose all of the features of the invention recited in claim 1.

As explained above, in *Hoffman* or *Ishii et al.*, there is no disclosure or suggestion regarding the medium support protruding outside of the image recording apparatus from the side of the image recording apparatus to be exposed. Therefore, *Hoffman* and *Ishii et al.* does not disclose nor

RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER

MAR 13 2006

Page 19

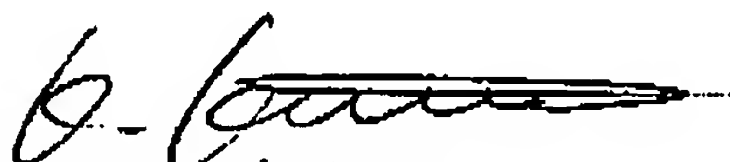
Application No.: 10/617,791

Art Unit: 3653

suggest all of the features of the invention recited in claim 1. Therefore, the invention is not anticipated by Hoffman or Ishii et al.

Reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,


Kazunao Kubotera
Reg. No. 51,194

TAKEUCHI & KUBOTERA, LLP
200 Daingerfield Rd.
Suite 202
Alexandria, VA 22314
Tel. (703) 684-9777

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Fax No. (571) 273-8300 on March 13, 2006.

Kazunao Kubotera